

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

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R 151725Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0818

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION USBERLIN UNN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 5712

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOR, US, UR, GE, GW

SUBJECT: FRG REPRESENTATIVE CAUS CALLS ON AMBASSADOR ABRASIMOV

REF: (A) BERLIN 5669; (B) USBER 905; (C) USBER 924

1. THE HEAD OF THE FRG PERMANENT REPRESENTATION IN EAST BERLIN, GUENTER GAUS, ON MAY 13 REQUESTED AN APPOINTMENT TO MAKE A RETURN COURTESY CALL ON SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO THE GDR ABRASIMOV REF (A). THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN A REMARKABLY SWIFT RESPONSE, PROPOSED MID-MORNING ON THE 14TH, AND UPON LEARNING THAT THIS WAS NOT CONVENIENT SUGGESTED A MID-AFTERNOON APPOINTMENT ON THE SAME DAY, NOTING THAT AMBASSADOR ABRASIMOV WOULD BE LEAVING BERLIN TEMPORARILY ON THE 15TH.

2. THE MEETING TOOK PLACE ON MAY 14 AND LASTED AN HOUR AND A HALF. (BECAUSE GAUS AND HIS DEPUTY BRAUETIGAM ARE CURRENTLY INVOLVED IN NEGOTIATIONS, THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF THIS SESSION HAS BEEN GIVEN TO US BY VON CONFIDENTIAL

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RICHTHOFEN)

3. THE ATMOSPHERE WAS GOOD THROUGHOUT. THREE SUBJECTS WERE DISCUSSED, THE MOST IMPORTANT OF WHICH WAS THE DROWNING ON MAY 11 OF A FIVE-YEAR-OLD TURKISH BOY IN THE SPREE RIVER ALONG ONE OF THE SECTOR-BORDER WATERWAYS. THE OTHER TWO SUBJECTS CONCERNED THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF VE DAY IN EAST BERLIN, AND A BRIEF REFERENCE TO INNER-GERMAN NEGOTIATIONS NOW IN PROGRESS.

4. AMBASSADOR ABRASIMOV COMMENTED AT THE OUTSET ON THE CELEBRATIONS THAT HAVE MARKED THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF VE DAY. HE SAID WITH EMPHASIS THAT HE HOPED THE FRG HAD NOTED THAT SOVIET STATEMENTS ON THIS EVENT HAD IN EVERY CASE ALLUDED TO GERMAN "LIBERATION FROM FASCISM." THERE HAD BEEN NO ATTACK ON THE FRG IN ANY REMARKS THE SOVIET REPRESENTATIVES HAD MADE.

5. GAUS THEN EXPRESSED DISTRESS OVER THE RECENT DROWNING OF A TURKISH CHILD UNDER THE EYES OF EAST GERMAN BORDER GUARDS, REF (B). HE SAID THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO GERMANIES COULD ONLY SUFFER AS A RESULT OF SUCH INCIDENTS. ABRASIMOV WAS QUICK TO RESPOND, EXPRESSING BY A WAVE OF HIS HAND DISDAIN FOR THE TREATMENT OF THIS INCIDENT IN NEUES DEUTSCHLAND THAT DAY UNDER THE FRONT-PAGE HEADLINE "THE WEST BERLIN SENAT ALONE IS TO BLAME." ABRASIMOV POINTED OUT THAT A MEETING OF MINDS HAS NOT YET BEEN REACHED ON THE "RESCUE AND AID IN CASES OF ACCIDENTS" DRAFT AGREEMENT CURRENTLY UNDER DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE BERLIN SENAT AND GDR AUTHORITITES. ABRASIMOV SUGGESTED TO GAUS THAT HE APPROACH GOVERNING MAYOR SCHUETZ "WHOM I KNOW FROM MY EARLIER DAYS TO BE A CLEVER MAN" WITH A VIEW TO MAKING "SOME GESTURE IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS", WHICH WOULD LEAD TO SIGNING THIS AGREEMENT. (COMMENT: IT IS INTERESTING TO COMPARE THIS APPROACH WITH ABRASIMOV'S COMMENTS ON THE SAME SUBJECT TO AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND ON MAY 12 REPORTED IN PARAGRAPH 13 OF REF (C).

6. GAUS REPLIED THAT THE DEFINITION OF "WATER BOUNDARIES" CONFIDENTIAL

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REMAINED A LEGAL QUESTION TO BE RESOLVED, NOTING THAT ALLIED AUTHORITIES IN WEST BERLIN WERE ALSO CONCERNED. ABRASIMOV DESCRIBED THE GDR VIEW OF THIS DEFINITION AS "INFLEXIBLE," SAYING THAT IT WAS TIME FOR THE SENAT AND ALLIES TO REACH AGREEMENT ALONG LINES OF THE GDR ARGUMENTATION. (GAUS, HOWEVER, BELIEVES THAT THERE IS STILL FLEXIBILITY ON THE GDR SIDE WITH RESPECT TO THIS MATTER.)

7. ABRASIMOV SAID THE DESCRIPTION OF WEST BERLIN AS THE "WESTERN SECTORS" WAS NOT ONLY POSSIBLE BUT PROPER IN LIGHT OF THE STATUS OF WEST BERLIN. ABRASIMOV STATED THAT HE WOULD DISCUSS THIS POINT WITH "HIS FRIENDS." ABRASIMOV ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SUCH TRAGEDIES PRESENT DIFFICULTIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORMAL RELATIONS.

8. THE DISCUSSION OF INNER-GERMAN NEGOTIATIONS WAS BRIEF. ABRASIMOV DID NOT SEEM INFORMED ON THE DETAILS OF TRAFFIC TALKS ON LINKS BETWEEN THE WESTERN SECTIONS OF BERLIN AND THE FRG, AND ON WATERWAY MATTERS. HIS GENERAL COMMENT WAS THAT THESE SUBJECTS FALL WITHIN THE COMPETENCE OF THE GDR AND SHOULD BE NEGOTIATED WITH GDR AUTHORITIES. COOPER

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